

# LONESTAR NEWS

SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION, 2BDE

FOB KALSU, IRAQ



February 1, 2006



## *Words from Lone Star 6*

Mar Haba, (Hello in Arabic),

Greetings to our friends and family, we miss you all! We hope and pray you are all doing well and guarding the home front as we defend the frontiers of freedom. Your love and support has taken us into yet another month of the deployment, and we cannot thank you enough.

The Lonestars have stayed the course with multiple missions, and the high level of activity helps the days go by quickly. Often it is surprising when another Sunday rolls around! We are starting to implement Saturday night "Movie Nights", so everyone will be able to look forward to the "weekends" here.

The Lonestar MiTT, in their training of the Iraqi soldiers, are truly doing a remarkable job that will have a great and lasting impact on this country. The training has included everything from weapons ranges to supply issues to briefing techniques, and all personnel involved are teaching *and* learning a vast amount each day. Working so closely with these soldiers of the Iraqi army has opened our eyes more to the culture and lifestyle of these fine, hardworking people.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company has been keeping busy with their usual complexity of tasks. The detainee facility continues to improve with loads of gravel to soak up some of the mud, along with other stellar improvements. Hurricane Soldiers truly play a vital role in keeping this base clean and safe, with several spring cleaning events and hours spent in the guard towers. The HHC operations center is usually kept busiest on mail days, when they usually receive more packages than there is space, but no one has any complaints about that.

Despite a huge mud field doubling as the runway, the Stalkers managed to get the UAV up and flying for multiple missions in the past few weeks. The intelligence they provide, in addition to the other platoons' dynamic roles, have given the Brigade and the Division the most they could ask for in the area of military intelligence. Several Stalkers have traveled to other locations in order to receive additional training, which only helps to increase Alpha Company's overall effectiveness.

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*Home Sweet FOB:* The daily reminder of where we are.

## Promotions

SGT Queensbourrow

## Reenlistments

SGT Mish

SSG Donlow

SSG Moton

SGT Wilkey



*Mail Call:* Delirium ensues with the arrival of mail.

While the high winds here occasionally give a scare to the Bulldogs and their antennas atop our buildings, the communications they provide are priceless. All of the time and effort that Bravo company spent training before we deployed is clearly paying off as they have not faltered in their mission here. They have begun preparing for the high heat of the summer months, by implementing ways to protect their equipment. Their efforts need to motivate all of us, particularly to start hydrating now!

This month, Environmental Morale Leave (commonly known as R & R) begins across the Brigade, and we will be sending several Soldiers to the location of their choice during the month of February. Also, the opportunity to take a short vacation to Qatar, a base located on the Persian Gulf, is provided to every Soldier during their deployment. Many of the comforts of home can be found in Qatar, to include a shopping mall, restaurants, and water sports on the Persian Gulf. Regardless of their destination, I encourage each Soldier to have a fun and relaxing time, however please keep in mind that we are still on a mission here. Each and every Soldier we have is extremely important, and we need everyone to be safe and vigilant on their time away from the theater of operation.

Your support has been priceless to us. It is touching to see the amount of love and concern that comes in the form of e-mails, letters, packages, and just your constant prayers and thoughts from home. On any certain day, we may receive over 50 packages and letters, and this brightens everyone's day, regardless of whether they have a package or not. The recipients of the packages have been very generous as well, and everyone shares; besides, if someone ate that much candy and snacks by themselves we might need a crane to bring the Soldiers home!

The guest writer for Private Talk was unsure if he was wearing out his welcome, however we convinced him to provide another article filled with his typical Private humor. Here is his article to give you a Soldier's point of view on day-to-day life here in Iraq.

#### PRIVATE TALK

*Well, there hasn't been too much happening here on FOB Kalsu lately. Which I would definitely say is a good thing. A slow and boring day is a very good day here. I don't think I will ever complain about being bored again. My mother will love to hear that.*

*We have completed the elections, which I am glad to say, went pretty smooth. It is hard to imagine how the Iraqis must feel about their new government. Honestly, I just hope they are pleased to have signs of stability in their country. I know there is still a lot of work to be done, but I think we are heading in the right direction. From the turn out at the elections I would say the Iraqi people, in general, feel the same.*

*I would have to say that the morale on the FOB is still very good. We have been here now almost two months, and everyone still seems to be in good spirits. I think it will turn a little when the Iraqi shops run out of new DVDs. For now though, you can't complain too much about getting every season of the Simpsons for only thirty bucks. Man I love the Simpsons. That Bart is such a kidder.*

*So otherwise everything is going pretty good here. Time is going fast, and every day gone is another day closer to going home. Home, umm, I can already smell the apple pie; and the beer of course. In this letter I would like to send an "I love you" to my mother Tammy, and the rest of my family. I would also like to say the same to all the other families with Soldiers serving here. Keep a warm heart and a cold one in the fridge; we'll be home before you know it.*

In closing, I would like to thank you again for your love, support and prayers. We cannot do what we do without your support. Please keep your heads up and eyes toward the goal with us. With all of us working together, we can accomplish great things. Keep the home fires burning! Thanks. Lone Star 6



LTC Muraski, Chaplain Hernandez, and the MiTT make some new friends by handing out soccer balls.



**Mud Men.** PFC Pucillio, PFC Morales and SPC Mekosh brag about who shot better on the Iraqi Range.



## HHC Hurricanes

Some HHC, STB Hurricane highlights from the past two weeks include more inspections of the detention facility, more combat patrols to Baghdad International Airport, Abu Ghraib Prison, Camps Victory and Liberty as well as superb maintenance support from the "Junkyard Dogs", the support platoon, headed up by the always-gregarious Chief Goodwin and SFC King. The "Law Dawgs" (sic) trained approximately 15 Soldiers from 1-10 Cavalry to support them in the detention facility, and also conducted a qualification range for the 12-gauge shotgun, still the best weapon of defense against the viable and terrifying threat posed by zombies.

All other systems in place, like the guard tower, dining facility operations and the internet café continue to operate with no problems, still an indicator of the professionalism of our troops here in theater. Another recent, important development in HHC is the rock-laying project, headed up by the orderly room's own and newly-promoted SFC Hernandez. Without any supervision, SFC Hernandez seized the initiative with a planned and executed mission to keep the ubiquitous FOB Kalsu mud from being tracked in and out of the orderly room by laying down rocks directly outside the orderly room. Great job, SFC Hernandez!

The MiTT, headed up by LTC Muraski, is still going strong, although since they're gone most of the time at Camp Charlie, we often don't exactly know what they're doing.

The Headquarters Staff element also keeps going strong, doing whatever they do over there. A big thanks to all of you over there sending mail. Mail call is a very important and popular event here. Again, thanks for everything you do and all the support you offer us from back home.

HURRICANE 6



## Words from the Chaplain

Hola, it is my prayer that all of you are doing well. Time is going by quickly as we are starting to go home on leave. That means that all Soldiers and families will need to prepare for this important event. Here we are giving some briefings about reunions. One of the important things to remember is that all changes can cause stress, and there will be a change no matter what when we go home. The important thing is to recognize the change and work it out. This separation is affecting everyone in one way or another, so just keep in mind that we will only be home this time for two weeks so it is important that both sides have a good time at home. Please be realistic with your expectations, stay flexible, negotiate activities, make individual time, and keep everything in moderation. Spouses and Soldiers, communicate your love to each other and make time for your children. Be aware that in some instances the children may want all the attention and they will be looking for it; even with this behavior, just be patient. Last but not least, and I know the leave is only two weeks, but make time for God with your family or friends, whatever your case. I encourage that no matter your religious tradition, make time for God as a family or as an individual, and have a good time at home.

**HAPPY REUNION - MAY GOD BLESS YOU!!!**

***"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.***

***I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress my God, in whom I trust."*** (Psalm 91)



CPT Bolender and LT Townsell proudly display the mounds of mail they are about to distribute to their Soldiers.



SFC King, SFC Hernandez and SGT Salceda beautify the area.

### ***Alpha Company Stalkers***

The Shadow Stalkers are continuing to support the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's mission here in sunny, windy and recently rainy Iraq. As another month winds down Soldiers continue to eagerly and professionally conduct their duty performance. Mail pick up is always an exciting time in the company command post with 1SG Mendez posing as the "year round" Santa Claus delivering packages to anxious Stalker Soldiers.

As the NFL season comes to an end, the Kalsu Morale Football League has just begun. First Platoon accounts for most of the A Co team to include such greats as PFC Stephan, SPC Moore, SPC Whippo, SSG Glassow, 1LT Aptaker, 1SG Mendez and our Company Commander CPT Carter. Currently, A Co is undefeated with a record of 0 and 0. Our first game was 22 JAN 06 against 2-8 Infantry S3 section.

WE'RE FLYING!!!! Finally the TUAV platoon is successfully putting eyes in the sky. After much heartache and mud slinging, we have finally been able to get the Launch and Recovery site somewhat neat and tidy and fit for operations.

PFC Gamiao turned 22 this month.

The RECON Platoon has been staying busy, going on missions two to three times a week. Most recently they were up in Baghdad International Airport to pick up an engineer platoon.

It was PFC McDaniels' maiden voyage as a driver; she did an outstanding job. They also visited the range on the FOB not too long ago and plan on making it back at least once every couple of weeks. I know SPC Saliba really got a "kick" out of firing the shotgun. Between manning the guard tower, working the PX, and losing people for leave shortly our seven-Soldier platoon is stretched pretty thin. That is right; your Soldiers will start trickling home for their 15 days soon. I know everyone is very anxious to reunite with his or her loved ones. Just remember we will also be here awaiting their safe return.

Prophet Platoon continues with the mission out here in FOB Kalsu and Camp David. LT Antao, SGT Choi, SPC Hussey, SPC Strebel and SPC Yarbrough went up to Camp Liberty for some training. LT Antao and SPC Yarbrough had the chance to go to the former Saddam's Main Palace in Baghdad.

**STALKERS LEAD THE WAY!**



***Preseason:*** Members of the STB football team train up for the upcoming season.



***Testing out the new uniforms:*** UAV platoon after a day on the football field.



***Waterfront Property:*** SPC Yarbrough in front of Saddam's main palace.



### ***Bravo Company Bulldogs***

Hello from Iraq. Not much has changed since the last newsletter; we continue to focus on maintaining our equipment and the brigade's communications network. We are leaning forward and building additional systems to help keep our equipment cool this summer using shades and commercial air conditioners. A little work now will save us a lot of problems later.

I would like to thank Sergeant Roy Wilkey, one of our Joint Network Node (JNN) team chiefs, and his family for his recent re-enlistment. I know I keep saying it, but I continue to be impressed with the willingness of our Soldiers to make this decision at this time, and am extremely proud to be able to work with the caliber of people in this unit.

I am going to continue the spotlight on our communications services with our 25F's. These Soldiers install, operate and maintain the Joint Network Node which provides telephone and data services to the brigade. The primary telephones are Voice Over IP (VOIP) phones that run on data networks, much like the new service being offered by cable companies to compete with traditional telephone companies. Each JNN shelter runs two networks; one is unclassified and provides access to the internet, the second is a secret network that is used for operations. The brigade uses our services for almost all command and control functions including: mission planning and coordination, daily update briefings and coordinating casualty evacuation. We also provide a morale function, allowing Soldiers to communicate with their loved ones back home. Our 25F's are providing a critical function to the brigade and everyone knows when something is not working correctly, which hasn't happened much thanks to the hard work and expertise of our Soldiers.

Our Soldiers continue to do great work and their spirits remain high. I am proud of each of them and the professionalism with which they go about their jobs.

### **Voice of the Warhorse**



***LT Hoberg reenlists SGT Wilkey at FOB Duke.***



**PFC Deeway lugs a fuel can, but keeps smiling.**



**Bravo Company Soldiers work high atop FOB Kalsu to keep the lines of communication open.**